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ABSTRACT

The chronicle provides an accurate and balanced representation of the history of the black experience in an effort to counteract misinformation presented in most textbooks. American history textbooks used in Wisconsin school districts ignore or distort the cultural experiences and contributions of blacks, often omitting important information, overgeneralizing, and distorting historical accuracy. The document is organized as a chronological outline, with dates presented for 11 major historical periods: The Colonial period, the Revolutionary War period, the Civil War and reconstruction, post-reconstruction, industrialization and world involvement, the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, World War II and the New Deal, post-World War II, the Protest Era, and the early 1970s. For each period, a brief overview summarizes major national and international political and social events which were significant to blacks. Following the historical overview, specific dates within the historical period are listed and events occurring on those dates are described. Example items include 1905, the Niagara Movement was formed by W.E.B. DuBois to reject paternalism, inferiority, and charity; 1939, Senator Theodore Bilbo of Mississippi introduced a plan to colonize black people back to Africa; and 1972, the National Black Convention in Gary, Indiana, drew up an agenda to present to political parties in the 1972 election. (DB)

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BLACK CHRONICLE
An American History Textbook Supplement

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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by
Clarence S. Kailin

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About the Author

Born in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1914, Clarence Kailin began studying Black history as the result of his early interest in the Civil Rights Movement during the 1930's. He started teaching Black History in the early 1960's, holding classes in his home and, later, presenting the first public Black history course in Madison at the YWCA. Mr. Kailin has given series of courses in Madison for Edgewood College, the Free University, West High School Interim Session, PTA groups, churches and neighborhood centers. Through the University of Wisconsin Extension he worked with the Center for Community Leadership Development, teaching classes in a number of Wisconsin cities. In 1967, his dissatisfaction with the portrayal of Blacks in high school history texts led him to organize the "Committee to Teach Black History in Madison Schools," a project which culminated in the writing of *Black Chronicle*.

Preface

A study of many American history texts used in Wisconsin school districts reveals some major failings. One of the most serious shortcomings of textbooks consists in the omission or distortion of the Black experience as well as inaccuracies in the portrayal of Black people.

Much of our history has been written to satisfy the needs and desires of a segregated, white-oriented society. Until recently, many American history texts ignored the very existence of Black people except as delightfully happy and contented slaves—passive, docile and imitative—a concept based on the racist myth that Africans and their descendents are biologically inferior.

The term "race" is part of the Black inferiority myth. About the time of the American Revolution, the Swedish botanist, Linnaeus, and others used "race" as a convenient term to describe physical differences in people. Subdividing people in this manner suited the slaveholder's ideology. The slaveholders not only created the concept of biologically different races, but they attempted to prove the superiority of the white race. This kind of "race," says anthropologist Ashley Montagu, defines conditions which do not in fact exist.

The racist speaks of color prejudice as something inborn, an instinctive part of human nature. This concept has been used both as rationale for belief in white supremacy and as an excuse to dominate Black people. The same people who had been forced into slavery were then characterized by the racist as being instinctively submissive..

A more recent racist concept speaks of socially induced inferiority in which Black people have been so unable to resist the destructive effects of ghetto life that they have become permanently crippled and can no longer function as useful citizens. Some people have even alleged that Black people have a basic personality weakness which is supposed to have made them the world's most natural slaves. Emancipation was said to be unnatural for Black people, leading to frustration, rage, insanity and suicide.

Afro-Americans have been considered as no more than wards of white folks who claimed that the Negro people had no history of their own and, therefore, no culture. Gunnar Myrdal described Black culture as a "distorted development, or a pathologic condition" of American culture in general, while Glazer and Moynihan maintained that the Negro "has no values and culture to guard and protect."

The turn of this century saw many prominent writers on Reconstruction. One of these historians, James Ford Rhodes, referred to the freedmen as "one of the most inferior races of mankind. . .a race of children." Columbia scholar, John W. Burgess, stated, "A black skin means membership in a race of men which has never of itself succeeded in subjecting passion to reason, has never, therefore, created any civilization of any kind." Another Columbia historian, William A. Dunning, said, "The Negro had no pride of race and no aspirations save to be like the whites."

These are but a few of the writers and a few of the myths that until the late 1960's made up white American historiography. This racist outlook makes it impossible to gain an undistorted view of American life and history.

Black people, however, have always been aware of the myth of white supremacy, and Black historians in particular have seen the need for a truthful history. Men like Carter G. Woodson, Charles Wesley, W.E.B. DuBois and scores of other historians—Black and white—have dedicated their lives to this work.

In spite of historians' efforts, it was not until the late 1960's that Black militant forces, both in the ghettoes and in the universities, forced open the doors of learning and forced whites to recognize the illegitimacy of white, racist, historical concepts.

Out of these struggles came demands for Black Study Departments and for integrated texts.

As Black studies became popular a large mass of hastily published, poorly edited, so-called integrated books came on the market. The inclusion of Black history usually meant mere name-dropping and the old stereotypes remained. Few books, almost none, take a concerned view of racism as our most destructive ideology. Some books attempt a neutral position showing both sides of the story, but neutralism in history is nothing more than a promotion of the status quo, and that is racism.

In the interest of excellence in education it is the duty of the historian to overcome racist trends in textbooks. Central to this study is the origin of racism as a product, not only of chattel slavery, but of the peonage-segregation system beginning after the reconstruction period. The Supreme Court's shameful decision of 1896, *Plessy vs. Ferguson,* in denying the injustice of Jim Crow, gave in to the demands of racism and allowed the law to impose social behavior. The growing violence and racism of succeeding years still afflict us and constitute the major problem of our time. This is the white problem we must deal with, not simply as an individual matter to be solved by being a "good person," but by viewing racism as an American institution.

The injustices of racism have not, of course, been confined to Black people in America. Other minorities, particularly the Native American, have also fared badly in their relationship to white America and in the way they have been depicted in books and other information media.

The work of Christian missionaries in this country has included covert and insidious attempts to take possession of the Indian soul and carve out little empires among the "fearsome heathens." During the 19th century, the "manifest destiny" movement culminated in the armed invasion and defeat of numerous tribes. Invasion became a veritable policy of genocide with survivors being forced onto reservations. Invasions of Indian land were followed by the combined intrusion of federal agencies, industrialists, researchers, anthropologists, do-gooders and tourists.

Women, too, have been relegated to an inferior position in American life and history writing. The role of women in our society, especially Black women, has been one of second-class citizenship. Except in a token way, women do not exist as corporation heads, army generals, executives, politicians, bankers, book publishers or in other traditional areas of power and influence.

The oppression of women began in the distant past, yet anthropological studies show that in an early stage of human history, men and women lived in a condition of complete equality. It was when men acquired the tools of production that they also acquired the power of economic and political control, together with the ideology of male supremacy. Similarly, it was the economic power white men gained through the slave system that gave them political and legal control and the ideological power of white supremacy and racism.

Much of our history writing has been oriented around the concept of the "great, white man." Thus, our history writing has often become not only elitist and racist, but male chauvinistic. A history that ignores or distorts the lives of a majority of the people cannot be either truthful or democratic.

The following chronicle should be considered only as a guide. A more complete study should be made, and for this purpose a bibliography has been included which lists books by category and historical period. Additional booklistings will be furnished on request.

Clarence Kailin

Early Times

50,000 B.C. The appearance of Homo sapiens in Africa marked the origin of the entire human race. Dispersal (and later reuniting) of people over the face of the earth led to a variety of physical types. Biologically different races do not exist; only the human race remains.

6,000 B.C. Egypt became an organized nation predating European history and culture by thousands of years. The source of Egypt's people and culture (the mythical Land of Punt) is present day Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia.

2980 B.C. During Egypt's Third Dynasty lived Imhotep, the multigenius architect, astronomer, poet, magician, philosopher and the real father of medicine. He designed the earliest stone building after which the pyramids were modeled. His best known saying was: "Eat, drink and be merry for tommorow we shall die" (J. A. Rogers, *World's Great Men of Color*, pp. 38-42).

1700 B.C. The first civilization of Europe was established on the Island of Crete. The ancestors of Crete were Africans.

600 B.C. The Iron Age began in Egypt. The Greek historian, Herodotus, stated that iron tools were used in building the Great Pyramid.

Much of ancient Greek mythology had its origin in Egypt. The Greeks referred to Ethiopia as the "land of burnt faces." Herodotus believed that the origin of the myth of Hercules was Egyptian. The Black Athenian poet, Euripides, referred to Ulysses "of sable hue, short wooly curls. . ." The gods and goddesses of Greece were considered Ethiopian: Jupiter, Bacchus, Apollo, Ammon, Venus, Isis, Diana, etc. The great men of Greece journeyed to Egypt for study: Thales, Anaximander, Pythagoras, Solon and Herodotus. Greek scholars who studied at Alexandria were Euclid, Archimedes, Eratosthenes, Hipparchus and Ptolemy (Lerone Bennett, *Before the Mayflower*, p. 5).

Some famous African figures: noted general, Hannibal; writer of fables, Aesop, sixth century slave of the Greeks; famous dramatist, Terence, Roman slave; Emperor of Rome (193-211 a.d.), Septimus Severus; Christian historian, Saint Augustine (J. A. Rogers, *World's Great Men of Color).*

9th to 13th Centuries. The first real civilization to reach Europe during the Middle Ages came from Moorish Spain. By the time of Columbus, Spain had become Christian and the Age of Enlightenment ended.

13th Century. West African civilization was at its peak. The university and commercial cities of the Songhay Empire on the Niger River were already legendary in Europe. Great kingdoms existed throughout Africa as far south as Zimbabwe (Basil Davidson, *Africa in History).*

15th Century. Invasions from the north, the Atlantic slave trade, and finally, the colonial partition of Africa led to her decline.

1440's. A Papal Bull allowed Christians to enslave any non-Christians. The rationale for slavery was religious. Color played no part in this early decision. In Spain and Portugal, the baptized slave took on the status of the free servant. (Lerone Bennett, "White Servitude in America," *Ebony*, November, 1969, pp. 31-40 and Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, pp. 3-29).

End of the 15th Century

Descendents of free Africans were among the first settlers of the New World. They came with Columbus, Cortes, Balboa and Pizarro.

Were Europeans the first to explore the Americas? Columbus in his log told of Black traders from Guinea. Early historians told of African kings who sent ships across the Atlantic. Many cultural discoveries in South America are of African origin (John G. Jackson, *Introduction to African Civilization*, pp. 232-263 and Carter G. Woodson, *The Story of the Negro Retold*, p. 14).

The Colonial Period

The decline of Feudalism, the beginnings of capitalism, the need for raw materials and new markets–these were the forces behind the founding of colonies

The European invaders first proceeded to rob the indigenous people, then enslave them. When enslavement failed, the invaders turned to genocide, forcing the survivors onto reservations.

European servitude came next. About 70 percent of the European population of the American colonies was, at one time or another, indentured under conditions of involuntary servitude closely resembling slavery. These were the poor, criminals, prisoners-of-war (Scots and Irish victims of Cromwell's campaigns), kidnapped children, religious dissidents and men dodging the European wars.

Later, labor shortages developed. Europe (Spain and Portugal by the 17th century and England in the 18th century) then turned to Africa for manpower, for Africa was accessible by ship. At this time there were no attitudes of white supremacy. The need for slavery was economic and the rationale was still religious (Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery).*

1619. A year before the arrival of the *Mayflower,* a ship landed at Jamestown, Virginia, with 19 Black Africans. The first Black Africans who came to America worked as indentured servants and then were freed, the same as many Europeans. These Africans could then work for wages, own land, vote, own servants (Black or white) and intermarry. However, the Africans lacked protection from their own government, and it was found cheaper to enslave them for life than to set them free and pay them wages. Again, the need was primarily economic and the rationale was still religious (Lerone Bennett, *Before the Mayflower* and Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery).*

1661. The first slave laws came into existence.

1661. In an early petition for freedom, Emanual Pieterson and Dorothy Angola, free Negroes, petitioned the Director-General and Lords councillors of New Netherlands for the freedom of their adopted child. Petitioning became a widely used weapon in the freedom fight (Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, Vol. 1, p. 1).

1663. The first serious conspiracy involving Black slaves occurred in Virginia. White indentured servants conspired with the Africans. The plot was betrayed and the rebels were executed. This is but one of many hundreds of attempts at freedom (Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts*, pp. 164-165). The need for ever greater profits and the constant threat of slave revolt brought harsher restrictions and systems of control. In time the South became an armed camp. Ideological control, too, became (and still is) a powerful weapon. To maintain injustice requires that it be rationalized. Shortly before the American Revolution a vast body of literature appeared—history, biology, religion, ethnology, sociology, "race": all designed to prove biological differences according to race and establish Black inferiority. As slavery became institutionalized, so did the ideology of white supremacy (Earl Conrad, *The Invention of the Negro*).

1660- 1670. Slave codes were established. Children now followed the slave condition of their mother. Baptized slaves were no longer given freedom. Should a slave's death result from punishment, the master was not to be held responsible. Slaves could not meet, even for religious purposes, without the presence of a white. Prohibited were guns, clubs, horns and drums (these last two were ancient methods of communication). Slaves could not vote, ride horseback, testify in court or control their own children. Slave marriages were not recognized. Families could be separated at the will of the master. Slave resistance took many forms: refusing to work, working as slowly as possible, damaging tools, killing farm animals, self-inflicting injury, burning buildings, destroying crops, "misunderstanding" orders, running away, organizing escape (underground railroad), buying freedom and causing insurrection (Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts*).

Maroons were groups of slaves who ran off to the swamps and forests and lived there for generations. They would make sporadic guerilla raids on the surrounding communities (Herbert Aptheker, *Journal of Negro History*, pp. 167-184).

1770. On May 5, runaway slave, Crispus Attucks, led a group against the British soldiers in Boston; he was killed along with four others. Said Daniel Webster, "From that moment we may date the severance of the British Empire" (Lerone Bennett, *Before the Mayflower*, p. 55).

The Revolutionary

War Period to the Civil War

Black people were desirous of freedom and independence and took it where they could. Black soldiers fought at Lexington, Concord, Ticonderoga and Bunker Hill; they were with the Green Mountain Boys. At least 5,000 fought in the Revolutionary Army, while thousands went over to the British, hoping for freedom. Another 100,000 "got freedom with their feet," escaping to Canada or Nova Scotia or running off with the Indians. Black soldiers also came from Haiti—the Fontages Legion—and fought at the Siege of Savannah (Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* and Lerone Bennett, *Before the Mayflower,* pp. 48-69).

1773. Phyllis Wheatley, the poet, is the first Black slave-woman and the second woman to publish a book. America's first Black author was Jupiter Hammon, 1760 (E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro in the United States,* p. 493).

1776. One of the first independent Black churches was the Harrison Street Baptist Church at Petersburg, Virginia.

1776. Through the efforts of Prince Hall, African Masonic Lodge No 1 was organized on July 3. In 1791, Prince Hall was made "Provincial Grand Master of North America." Today there are over a half-million lodge members (John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom,* p. 164).

1776. The Declaration of Independence was revolutionary to the extent that it demanded independence from British domination, but proslavery forces maintained the slave system. Not only did northern business and banking institutions become tied in with the slave system, but slavery became entrenched in highest government circles. Twelve of our first sixteen presidents owned slaves and a number of these had children by their slaves. The system of slavery intensified the oppression of all women. The degrading effects of oppression were noted by the wife of President James Madison, who spoke of the white wife as "the chief mistress in a house of prostitution" (Herbert Aptheker, *Political Affairs* Magazine, February, 1971, pp. 57-58).

1787. Absolam Jones and Richard Allen organized the Philadelphia Free African Society. This mutual assistance society had insurance features and was the forerunner of today's Black insurance organizations. Allen was chiefly responsible for the founding of the African Methodist Church, which became independent in 1816 (Charles H. Wesley, *Richard Allen: Apostle of Freedom).*

1788. The Constitution of the United States was accepted. Article I, Section 2, excluded Indians and slaves from representation.

1789. Oloudah Equiano, former slave, published his autobiography in England (Paul Edwards, ed., *Equiano's Travels).*

1790. James Derham was the first Black physician in North America. He enjoyed a flourishing practice among the elite of New Orleans *(M.D. Medical News* Magazine, April, 1963, p. 202).

1791. Slaves of the French colony of Haiti revolted successfully. Napoleon attempted to crush the revolt and lost much manpower; he was forced to sell Louisiana in 1803 (C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins).*

1793. The Fugitive Slave Law was based on Article IV, Section 2, of the Constitution which states that a person held to service shall not be considered free by virtue of having fled into a free state.

1800. During Gabriel Prosser's slave uprising many thousands of Black people were betrayed. Stated one slave just before execution, "I have nothing more to offer than what General Washington would have to offer had he been taken by the British and put to trial by them" (Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts,* p. 223).

1811. Black nationalist, Paul Cuffee, commanded a ship which sailed to Africa with 38 Black emigrants from America.

1816. The American Colonization Society was formed. Its purpose was the deportation of free Black people who were considered a menace to the slave system. The Society met with determined opposition from virtually all Black people (Carter G. Woodson and Charles H. Wesley, *The Negro in Our History,* pp. 281-293).

1820. The African Grove Theatre was formed in New York. James Hewlett and Ira Aldridge were the first of the great Black Shakespearean actors. Jim Crow customs drove Aldridge to England where be became famous (Langston Hughes and Milton Meltzer, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America,* p. 74).

Ira Aldridge.
Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

1822. Many thousands of Black people were involved in the Denmark Vesey Conspiracy of Charleston, South Carolina. The 37 who were hanged followed the conduct of Peter Poyas who stated, "Do not open your lips! Die silent as you shall see me do" (Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts*, p. 272).

1827. *Freedom's Journal*, the first Black newspaper, made its appearance four years before Garrison's *Liberator*. Extracts of the first edition include the following: ". . .Too long have others spoken for us. . .we should not be unmindful of our brethren who are still in the iron fetters of bondage" Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*. Vol. 1, p. 82).

1829. David Walker's *Appeal* was published. He asked slaves to throw off their chains. The paper struck terror into the white South *(One Continual Cry: David Walker's Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World 1829-1830)*.

1831. The first Annual Negro Convention was held in Philadelphia (Philip S. Foner, ed., *The Voice of Black America*, pp. 56-60).

1831. Nat Turner's Insurrection. Fifty-five whites were killed; over 100 slaves and free Blacks were summarily shot or beheaded in retaliation. Trials were held later and many were hung (Herbert Aptheker, *Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion)*.

1836. Sam Houston's proslavery men forced the secession of Texas from Mexico. In 1844, slaveowner, James Polk, won the presidential election on an annexationist platform. Texas became a state in 1845.

1839. Slaves aboard the *Amistad*, seized the slave ship and obtained freedom after a long legal battle.

Joseph Cinque, African prince, leader of the revolt aboard the slave ship, *Amistad*.
From the collections of the New Haven Colony Historical Society.

1841. Black inventor, Norbert Rillieux, obtained a patent on a vacuum-pan, sugar-refining process (Louis Haber, *Black Pioneers of Science and Invention*, pp. 13-23).

1846. Southern slavemasters desperately needed new land to expand their slave economy and for this reason involved the United States in a war with Mexico (William Loren Katz, *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History*, pp. 77-79 and John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South*, pp. 102-113).

Henry David Thoreau went to jail rather than pay his taxes during the war and having served in the invasion, Ulysses S. Grant said; "I do not think there was ever a more wicked war than that waged by the United States on Mexico" (William Loren Katz, *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History*, p. 78).

According to the terms of the peace treaty signed in 1848, Mexico lost half of its national territory—over 900,000 square miles constituting California, Nevada, Utah, most of Arizona, a substantial part of New Mexico, and small parts of Colorado and Wyoming. The Mexican, Spanish and Indian people of the area were shamefully exploited and proslavery attitudes became prevalent in many of the new territories.

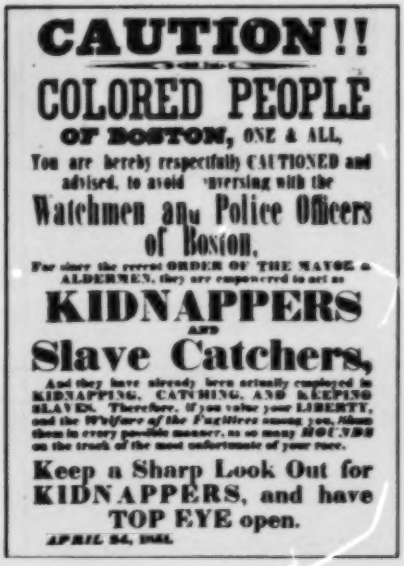
1847. The first issue of Frederick Douglass' *North Star* appeared. This was the ninth Black paper since *Freedom's Journal* (Philip S. Foner, *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 84-89).

Frederick Douglas.
Wisconsin Historical Society.

1848. The following are statements on the Mexican War from the January 28 issue of the *North Star:* ". . .the evil spreads. Large demands are made on the national treasury, (to wit: the poor man's pockets). . .The curse is upon us. . .The people appear to be completely in the hands of office seekers, demagogues and political gamblers. . .a general outcry is heard. . .'Mexico must be humbled!. . .National honor!. . .Free institutions!' " (Philip S. Foner, *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, 1950, Vol. I, p. 292).

1848. Henry Brown, a Virginia Slave, climbed into a box and had a white friend nail it up and send him by express to Philadelphia.

Henry "Box" Brown makes his escape from slavery.
Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College.



CAUTION!!

COLORED PEOPLE

OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,

You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and advised, to avoid conversing with the

Watchmen and Police Officers of Boston,

For since the recent ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN, they are empowered to act as

KIDNAPPERS AND Slave Catchers,

And they have already been actually employed in KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING SLAVES. Therefore, if you value your LIBERTY, and the *Welfare of the Fugitives* among you, Mann them in every possible manner, as so many HOUNDS on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.

Keep a Sharp Look Out for KIDNAPPERS, and have TOP EYE open.

APRIL 24, 1851.

Black abolitionists issue a warning.
New York Public Library.

1848. Slaves, William and Ellen Craft, made a dramatic escape from Macon, Georgia.

1850. A more effective Fugitive Slave Act was passed. Slaveholders were allowed to pursue their "property" into other states. Federal marshals were instructed to aid slaveowners (William Loren Katz, *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History*, pp. 188-189 and John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, pp. 260-265 and pp. 367-370).

1854. The "Knights of the Golden Circle" was organized. This was a slave-expansionist scheme designed to make Havana the center of a huge slave empire. Plans came to an end with the onset of the Civil War (John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South*, pp. 124-128).

1857. Supreme Court Chief Justice, Roger Taney, delivering the majority opinion, declared that Dred Scott was a slave, not a citizen, and "had no rights which a white man was bound to respect." Commented Frederick Douglass, "This very attempt to blow out forever the hopes of an enslaved people may be one necessary link in the chain of events preparatory to the downfall and complete overthrow of the whole slave system" (Philip S. Foner, *Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, Vol. 2, p. 412).

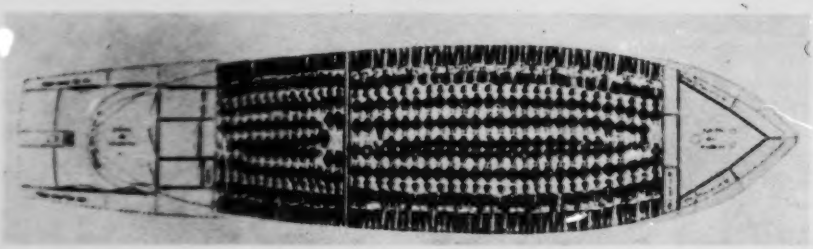
1859. John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry struck fear into the South and sparked hope in the hearts of the slaves (W. E. B. DuBois, *John Brown*).

1860. Martin R. Delany, doctor, dentist, explorer, Civil War major and politician, traveled to Nigeria in search of Black commercial and cultural ties and possibilities of emigration (M. R. Delany and Robert Campbell, *Search for A Place: Black Separatism and Africa,* 1860).

1860. Fugitive slave, Charles Nalle, was taken by slave catchers. Harriet Tubman led the battle that freed him from the police at Troy, New York (Earl Conrad, *Harriet Tubman,* pp. 131-138).

Fleeing the slave catchers. Library of Congress.

1860. By this time some 15 million Africans had been brought to the Americas. An estimated three out of four died in the slaving wars, were killed resisting enslavement or died of disease en route to the Americas. Thus, it can be estimated that Africa lost 60 million people.



Cross section of a typical slave ship. New York Public Library.

1860. South Carolina seceded on December 20.

The Civil War and Reconstruction

1861. On April 12, Fort Sumter was fired upon. Abraham Lincoln attempted to fight "constitutional" war—with or without slavery. Said Frederick Douglass: "The simple way, then, to put an end to the savage and

desolating war now waged by the slaveholders, is to strike down slavery itself, the prime cause of that war" (Philip S. Foner, *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, Vol. 3, p. 94).

1861. On April 29, three hundred Black men of Washington, D.C., offered their services for the Union Army, but the offer was refused. Similar offers came from New York, Michigan and elsewhere, but all were rejected.

18 In May, after General Butler entered Fort Monroe, Virginia, thousands of slaves seeking freedom besieged the camp. By 1862, a Confederate general estimated that North Carolina lost a million dollars worth of slaves each week (Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts*, pp. 359-374).

1862. Under pressure from both Black and white antislavery leaders, the first Black regiment was formed. Over 200,000 Black men fought in the Union armies in 450 battles; 40,000 were killed. Segregated troops lasted until the Korean War in the 1950's (Thomas W. Higginson, *Army Life in a Black Regiment*).

1863. Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1. Welcomed by Black conventions, trade unions and Republican press, the Proclamation caused Democrats to call Lincoln a dictator and southern religious bodies to unite in protest (Frederick Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglas*, pp. 351-357 and William Z. Foster, *The Negro People in American History*, p. 256).

1863. Harriet Tubman of Underground Railroad fame (she brought 300 slaves to freedom) organized and led guerilla raids into Confederate territory (Earl Conrad, *Harriet Tubman*, pp. 169-178).

Harriet Tubman as a soldier.
Crown Publishers.

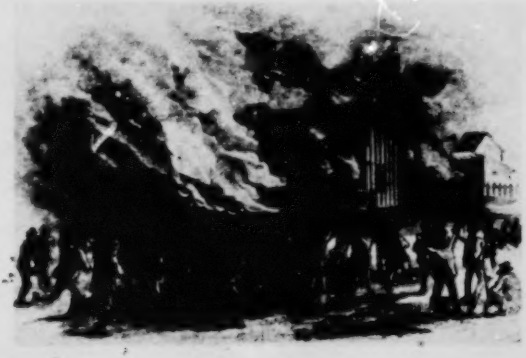
1864. Three hundred Black prisoners at Fort Pillow were massacred during April by orders of Confederate General Nathan B. Forrest, who later founded the Ku Klux Klan (W. E. B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, p. 114).

1865. The Freedman's Bureau was created on March 3.

1865. Abraham Lincoln investigated the possibility of deporting all Black people to Africa (W.E.B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, pp. 145-149).

1865. Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 14. Former slaveowner, Andrew Johnson, became president.

1865. The 13th Amendment was passed on December 18.
Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.
Section 2. Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.



Burning a freedmen's school during a riot in Memphis in 1866. American History Division, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

1867. The Reconstruction Act was passed on March 2. For the first time Black men participated in political conventions, helped write new state constitutions and held office. Twenty Blacks were elected to Congress and two Blacks became senators. Hundreds of Blacks held office on the state and municipal levels. For the first time the South got a public school system (William. Loren Katz, *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History*, pp. 260-286).

1867. In April, the first national meeting of the Ku Klux Klan, organized by Nathan B. Forrest, of Fort Pillow infamy, was the beginning of a reign of terror and death against Black and white Republicans. Blacks fought back and held office until the turn of the century. The last Black Congressman, until 1928, was George H. White of North Carolina, who remained in office until 1901 (John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction After the Civil War*, p. 154).

1868. Reconstruction was undermined. Two state senators and 25 state representatives from the Georgia Legislature were expelled because they were Negroes. Representative Henry M. Turner protested the expulsion in the House: "...The scene presented in this House today is one unparalleled in the history of the world. From this day...no analogy for it can be found. Never, in the history of the world, has a man been arraigned before a body clothed with legislative, judicial or executive functions and charged with the offence of being of a darker hue than his fellowmen...The Anglo-Saxon race, sir, is a most surprising one...I was not aware that there was in the character of that race so much cowardice, or so much pusillanimity..." (Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, Vol. 2, pp. 569-571).

1868. The 14th Amendment was passed on July 28.
Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. (In *Brown vs. Board of Education*, 1954, the Supreme Court declared that to segregate school children by race was a denial of "the equal protection of the laws" under the Fourteenth Amendment. More recent cases under this amendment have protected Blacks' rights to equality and peaceful protest against grievance.)
Section 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

1869. Frances E. W. Harper, noted poet, published her *Moses, Story of the Nile*. Also of this general period was William Wells Brown, whose *Narrative* appeared in 1849; his first novel was published in 1853.

1869. The National Colored Labor Union, first nationwide expression of the Black trade union movement, assembled at Union Leage Hall in Washington, D.C. The meeting was called by the Maryland State Convention of Negro workers; 23 states were represented with 200 delegates in attendance (Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, Vol. 2, pp. 629-636).

1870. The 15th Amendment was passed on March 30.
Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

1871. On May 12, a young boy launched a "sit-in" aboard a segregated Louisville horse-drawn streetcar. "Screaming white teenagers cursed him, and eventually dragged him from the car. When the youth finally fought back, he was arrested. In the days that followed, other Negroes—mostly young men—entered streetcars and sat strong and silent in the face of abuse. . .The Louisville company, in the face of mounting violence and opposition, agreed to integrate their street railway" (William Loren Katz, *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History*, p. 343).

1872. Black inventor, Elijah McCoy, obtained a patent for a lubrication device.

1875. James Augustine Healy became the first Black Catholic Bishop.

1876. The art works of Edmonia Lewis were shown at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition.

Edmonia Lewis.
Wisconsin Historical Society.

The Post-Reconstruction Period

1877. Reconstruction was betrayed. President Johnson had earlier pardoned 14,000 top Confederates, thus restoring political power to the old planter class (W. E. B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, p. 254 and pp. 580-635).

In the Hayes-Tilden dispute for the presidency, Rutherford Hayes agreed to remove federal troops from the South in return for the backing of northern industrialists. With troops gone, the Ku Klux Klan slaughter of Blacks accelerated. Thousands of people were killed (John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, pp. 324-343).

While the destruction of slavery as a social system was revolutionary, the fatal weakness of Reconstruction was the failure to break up the great landed estates and provide land for the freed men. Much of the abandoned land was bought up by northern speculators, while the railroad promoters received gifts of no less than 160,000,000 acres from the states and from the federal government as well as vast money grants (William Z. Foster, *Outline Political History of the Americas*, p. 227).

1879. Thousands of Black people fled the terror, peonage, disfranchisement and lack of educational facilities in Louisiana and elsewhere. In spite of these difficulties, Black organizational activities continued as five new Black colleges, six newspapers and various political, economic, social and professional groups were established (Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, Vol. 2, pp. 645-749 and pp. 713-723).

1883. The death of Sojourner Truth ended a lifetime struggle for emancipation and women's rights. "The man over there says women need to be helped into carriages and lifted over ditches, and to have the best places everywhere," she declared. "Nobody ever helps me into carriages or over puddles, or gives me the best place—and ain't I a woman? Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted and gathered into barns and no man could head me—and ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most of 'em sold into slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, non but Jesus heard me—and ain't I a woman?" (Lucy Komisar, *The New Feminism*, p. 89).

1884. Granville T. Woods received a patent on a telephone transmitter. He also obtained patents on a railway telegraphy system (1887) and an automatic air brake (1902).

1884. Ida B. Wells-Barnett successfully sued the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad for Jim Crow treatment. This incident began her life-long crusade for justice (Alfreda Duster, ed., *Crusade for Justice: Autobiography of Ida B. Wells).*

1884. European powers came to an agreement on the division of Africa. The United States was the first nation to recognize and approve the rule of King Leopold over the people of the Congo. Vast slaughter of the Congolese people followed. Mark Twain's exposure of the slaughter *(King Leopold's Soliloquy),* in 1905, was suppressed when the Morgans, Rockerfellers and the Guggenheims became financially involved in the Congo ("Introduction", *King Leopold's Soliloquy*, pp. 12-17 and Edwin P. Hoyt, Jr., *The Guggenheims and the American Dream*, pp. 151-153).

1886- 1900 This was the era of the Populist Movement. Among the most important progressive organizations of the period were the various Colored

Congolese victims of King Leopold's policy. Refusal to work or inability to "make quotas" was punished by loss of a hand. Thousands suffered this fate.
Seven Seas Publishers, Berlin.

Farmers' Alliances with organizations in twenty states and 1,250,000 members. They had control over several state governments and elected members to a vast number of local offices. By the turn of the century, the Alliances were split and crushed by reaction and racism. Other important Black organizations of the era were the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association and the Southern Alliance (C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow).*

1890. By the beginning of the 1890's, there were 154 Black newspapers.

1890. Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, a former Georgia legislator, saw no hope for reforming white America and turned to African emigration (Edwin S. Redkey, *Black Exodus: Black Nationalist and Back-to-Africa Movements, 1890-1910,* pp. 24-46).

1890-1900 This was the period when the Jim Crow laws nullified all the gains of Reconstruction. Through various unconstitutional gimmicks almost all voting rights were lost. Enforced segregation became the tool for dividing Black and white workers and farmers. These laws coincided with the appearance of American monopolies—of the Rockefellers, Carnegies, Armours and Morgans—especially with the Spanish-American War when American imperialism came on the scene. Following the emergence of American Imperialism and closely connected, were the historical works of Columbia scholars, John W. Burgess and William Dunning, whose works on Reconstruction portrayed Black people as childlike and savage. Historian, James Ford Rhodes, painted the same

picture. In so far as these works became the accepted version of history, a racist interpretation of events was continued in later textbooks (Carter G. Woodson, ed., "Historian on Reconstruction", *Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 23, January, 1938, pp. 16-34).

1895. Frederick Douglass died.

1895. Booker T. Washington spoke at the Atlanta Cotton Exposition. He stated, "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers. . .The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly. . ." (Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery*, p. 221). He gained strong financial backing for his Tuskegee Institute from millionaires Carnegie, H. H. Rogers, William H. Baldwin and others. While not responsible for the Supreme Court decision of 1896, Booker T. Washington no doubt made it easier for the judges to come to their decision on *Plessy vs. Ferguson.*

1896. The Supreme Court issued its *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision. In upholding the separatist laws, the Court denied that Jim Crow was oppressive. The decision denied the possibility of establishing social mores by legislation, even though that was the entire intent of the Jim Crow laws. Because of the demands of white supremacy, individuals could no longer function freely and were forcefully separated by color. Everything became separated, from telephone booths to graveyards for pets. The exploitation, violence and hardening white supremacy attitudes of today are in part the result of that decision (Otto H. Olsen, "Introduction," *The Thin Disguise (Plessy vs. Ferguson).*

1896. William Edward Burghardt Du Bois published the Harvard Historical series No. 1, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America.* This was the first of 35 volumes of African and Afro-American history written or edited by W. E. B. DuBois.

Expansion, Industrialization and World Involvement

1898. American expansion continued. In addition to creating a colony-like status for Black America, the United States also launched war against Spain and appropriated Cuba, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines.

In the conquest of the Philippines, racist feelings led to a wanton slaughter of the people. Stated a volunteer from the state of Washington, "Our fighting blood was up and we all wanted to kill 'niggers'. . ." (Daniel B. Schirmer, *Republic or Empire: American Resistance to the Philippine War*, p. 142. Also see Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and Birth of American Imperialism*, 2 volumes).

After gaining control of the Virgin Islands (90 percent black), the United States instituted military control from 1917 to 1931. American marines occupied the Dominican Republic from 1916 to 1924 and Haiti from 1917 to 1934. Economic and political control were maintained thereafter with the marines being used as needed.

1900. W. E. B. DuBois was Secretary of the Pan-American Conference held in England. This was the first of many such meetings as stronger ties with Africa and the West Indies were established.

W. E. B. DuBois.
DuBois Estate

1900- 1940 Although Congress had specifically outlawed peonage in 1867, the evil had not been abolished in practice. There were few prosecutions against the southern planters, yet the Georgia (white) Baptist Convention, held in Augusta on November 11, 1939, stated, "Peonage or debt slavery has by no means disappeared from our land. There are more white people affected by this diabolical practice than were slaveholders; there are more Negroes held by these debt slavers than were actually owned as slaves before the war between the states" (Herbert Aptheker, *Afro-American History,* p. 192).

1902. Former slave, Susie King Taylor, wrote her *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp.* She had been a Civil War nurse, teacher and cook.

1903. W. E. B. DuBois published *Souls of Black Folk.*

1903. The National Association of Afro-American Steam and Gas Engineers and Skilled Laborers was founded. This association became important in Pittsburgh.

1905. The Niagara Movement was formed with W. E. B. DuBois as the primary leader. The aim was to reject paternalism, inferiority and charity and to fight for the full manhood of Black people the world over (Herbert Aptheker, *Afro-American History: The Modern Era,* pp. 127-158).
Other organizations of the period included: The National Afro-American League; The National Association of Colored Women, 1893;

American Negro Academy, 1897; The Negro Businessmen's League, 1900; *The Boston Guardian Newspaper,* 1901; *Voice of the Negro* (Atlanta), 1904; *Chicago Defender,* 1905.

1906. In Atlanta, white mobs took to the streets and slaughtered Black people, looting and burning their homes. In Brownsville, Texas, that same year, President Theodore Roosevelt dismissed an entire Black batallion of the 25th Regiment after they had defended themselves from a white mob. In 1973, a surviving soldier of the batallion won an honorable discharge *(Wisconsin State Journal* and *Capital Times,* February 12, 1973; *Baltimore Afro-American,* February 17, 1973).

1907. Nat Love, Black cowboy, better known as "Deadwood Dick", published his autobiography, *Life and Adventures of Nat Love.*

1908. An anti-Negro riot took place in Springfield, Illinois, when a white woman admitted before a grand jury that she had falsely accused a Black man of rape. A white mob nevertheless went on a racist rampage, killing, burning homes and looting. The white leaders were not punished (John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom,* p. 443).

1909-1910 The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded.

1910. The National Urban League was founded.

1913. Noble Drew Ali founded the first Moorish-American Science Temple.

1915. The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson.

1916. Dr. Woodson founded the Associated Publishers as well as the *Journal of Negro History.* In his lifetime, he wrote or coauthored several dozen volumes of Black history.

1916. Despair and hopelessness in racist America led to a form of "Negro Zionism" and Black pride in the Universal Negro Improvement Association of Marcus Garvey. Although this was one of the first real mass movements of Black Americans, Black separatism and "Back to Africa" themes doomed this program to failure as the major evils of segregation and exploitation were not attacked (John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom,* p. 492).

1917. With the onset of World War I, President Wilson abolished most jobs that Black people had held in the federal government. Sixty-six lynchings were reported in 1916, forty-four in 1917. That year (July 1-3) in East St. Louis, white mobs murdered 125 Black people, and destroyed 300 homes (Elliott M. Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis,* July 2, 1917).

When Black soldiers in Houston, Texas, defended themselves against a lynch mob, 99 found themselves sentenced to prison, and 13 were

hanged. Two hundred thousand Black American soldiers, sent to France to fight in the war, were segregated by the American Army abroad as they had been in the United States (For a detailed accounting of lynchings over the years, see Ralph Ginzburg, *100 Years of Lynchings;* William L. Patterson, ed., *We Charge Genocide;* Rayford W. Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro).*

1917. On July 28, a silent protest parade was held against the lynchings of Blacks. Thousands of New Yorkers marched, bearing banners saying, "Mr. President, why not make America safe for democracy?", "Give me a chance to live," and "thou shalt not kill" (Langston Hughes and Milton Meltzer, *Pictorial History of the Negro in America,* p. 267).

1918. Hugh Mulzac was the first Black man to win a shipmaster's license, but he was not allowed to take charge of a ship until 1942 (Hugh Mulzac, *A Star to Steer By).*

1919. The end of the war meant a redivision of Africa, but the African liberation movements forced the European powers to use less blatant methods of dividing up the spoils: the German colonies were "mandated" to Britain, South Africa, France, Belgium and Portugal.

1919. A Pan-African Movement Conference was held in Paris.

1919. During the Great Steel Strike, the Commission of Inquiry of the Interchurch Work Movement noted that the steel companies imported Black workers and shifted them from plant to plant, pitting them against white workers. Failure to organize Black labor was the fault of racist whites, but Black labor got the blame for strikebearing (William Z. Foster, *Negro People in American History,* pp. 438-439).

1920- 1930 The 1920's were years of economic depression for the South. A number of white colleges were rocked by strikes, while students at Black colleges were protesting white racist control.

The Harlem Renaissance

The Harlem Renaissance was a period of renewed cultural and protest expansion with historians, poets, novelists, musicians and actors exemplified by such men and women as Countee Cullen, Noble Sissle, Paul Robeson, Duke Ellington, Alain Locke, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Bessie Smith, James Weldon Johnson, Jean Toomer, Langston Hughes, Jessie Faucet, E. Franklin Frazier, Benjamin Brawley, Charles Wesley, Carter Woodson and scores more. The protest theme common to the Harlem Renaissance was summed up by Claude McKay in 1919, "If we must die, let it not be like hogs. . .Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack. Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back" (Arna Bontemps, *American Negro Poetry,* p. 31).

1920. The National Association for the Promotion of Labor Unionism among Negroes was founded.
That same year in New York, the Friends of Negro Freedom was

founded to unionize migrants, protect tenants, and establish educational forums.

1921. The American Trades Council was formed in Chicago.

1924. The Ku Klux Klan marched in Madison, Wisconsin.

Wisconsin State Historical Society

1925. The American Negro Labor Congress was formed for the purpose of unifying Black and white labor on a program of Negro rights and industrial unionism.
A. Philip Randolph organized the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

1928. Oscar de Priest was elected to Congress from Chicago. He was the first Black Congressman since 1901.

1930's In many large cities, boycotts were organized against merchants who would not hire Black labor. Their slogan was, "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work."

1931. The Nation of Islam was founded. Commonly known as Black Muslims, members of the Nation of Islam seek a solution to the problems of racism by complete separation from whites. Their religion is Moslim (Eric C. Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America).*

1931. In Scottsboro, Alabama, nine young men were charged with "rape" and sentenced to death. William L. Patterson and the International Labor Defense organized a protest and defense that was heard around the world. The death sentences were reversed. Ralph Grey, head of the Sharecroppers Union in Alabama, was lynched after proposing a resolution in defense of the Scottsboro victims. By 1936, this organization had some 12,000 members (Haywood Patterson and Earl Conrad, *Scottsboro Boy).*

The New Deal and World War II

1932. Angelo Herndon, Black Communist organizer, was arrested in Atlanta on a charge of "inciting insurrection" (organizing the unemployed). He was freed after a five-year battle during which hundreds of thousands of signatures were collected on his behalf (Angelo Herndon, *Let Me Live*).

1935. In Lowndes County, Alabama, six were killed in a sharecroppers strike.

1935. Facist Italy invaded Ethiopia. Black Americans responded with material and financial assistance for this African nation.

1936. The League of Struggle for Negro Rights merged with the National Negro Congress. It became an important base for the foundation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (C.I.O.).

1936. The formation of the C.I.O. carried on a prolonged struggle for industrial unionism and built organizations in the auto, steel and electrical industries. The door was opened to Black membership and in ten years the C.I.O. had a half million Black members. Today the C.I.O. is merged with the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) and much discrimination exists, especially in the crafts and in all positions of leadership.

1937- 1939 In the Spanish Civil War, over 100 Black Americans enlisted in the International Brigades that fought in Spain against the German and Italian aggressors.

1939. Senator Theodore Bilbo of Mississippi introduced a plan to colonize Black people back to Africa (Langston Hughes and Milton Meltzer, *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America*, p. 268).

1941. Although 1,000,000 Black soldiers were drafted during World War II to fight against German and Italian facism, the problem of obtaining democracy here in the United States was not faced. Integration in the armed forces and on the industrial front was very token. When A. Philip Randolph threatened to march 100,000 Black people on Washington, D.C. in protest, President Roosevelt issued his famous Executive Order 8802, prohibiting discrimination in defense industries. Nevertheless, Blacks were still the last hired and the first fired. Continued migrations of Black people from southern rural areas brought 30 percent of the Black population to 12 large cities. Roosevelt had no Black people in his Cabinet, but there was a group of Black advisors who were known as his "Black Cabinet." Among the advisors was Mary McLeod Bethune, noted for the college she built at Daytona Beach, Florida.

1942. James Farmer formed the Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.).

1943. On June 20, a three day riot began against the Black people of Detroit in which 25 Black and 9 white people were killed.

The Post-World War II Period

1945. With the end of World War II, Vietnam proclaimed independence. The Japanese had controlled this former French colony during the war. When the Japanese were disarmed by the British and Americans, the control of Vietnam was promptly returned to the French. This was the start of American involvement in Indo-China. Black soldiers were used in large numbers in Indo-China, suffering an abnormally high death rate and segregation equal to any experienced in Mississippi. In time, many Black soldiers (white, too) found themselves in sympathy with the Vietnamese Liberation Movement.

1946. The National Negro Congress presented the first petition of Negro people to the United Nations.

1949. Attempts were made to assassinate Paul Robeson as he sang at Peekskill, New York. Hundreds of Black and white people were cut, beaten and clubbed by members of the American Legion and state troopers (Howard Fast, *Peekskill U.S.A.*).

1950. Black author, Gwendolyn Brooks, won the Pulitzer Prize in literature.

Gwendolyn Brooks.
Clarence Kailin.

1950- 1960. Negro labor organizations, such as the American League of Colored Laborers in New York, were formed. These unions were formed as separate organizations of necessity (as were the Black churches, newspapers, etc.), but they had a friendly spirit of cooperation with white workers.

1950. On June 10, Paul Robeson, addressing the National Labor Conference for Negro Rights, called attention to the fact that the Truman Administration was sending arms to the French Government to be used against Vietnamese patriots. Four years later, Robeson asked, "Shall Negro share-croppers from Mississippi be sent to shoot down brown-skin peasants in Vietnam?" *(Freedomways,* 1971, Vol. 1, p. 122).

1951. The historic petition, *We Charge Genocide,* edited by William L. Patterson, National Executive Secretary of the Civil Rights Congress, was presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations, protesting and documenting the crime of genocide against Black people of the United States. Chronologically arranged from January, 1945, to June, 1951, it documented hundreds of cases of murder, beating, burning, torture, rape, economic sanctions and "legal lynching," for example: the electrocution of the Martinsville Seven in Richmond, Virginia.

1954. The Supreme Court issued the historic decision on *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas.* As a result of a suit carried by the NAACP, the United States Supreme Court reversed the 1896 *Plessy* Decision. It found that segregation is inherently unequal but set no time limit for the schools to desegregate. As a result the segregationists were able to organize massive resistance and the inevitable violence that goes with it. Officials closed many schools to avoid integrating.

1954. Having been converted to the Nation of Islam while in prison, Malcolm Little was sent to New York to head the Harlem Islamic movement. Under the new name of Malcolm X, he soon became a nationally prominent leader, but by 1964, internal differences within the Nation of Islam forced him out. After trips to Mecca, he established Muslim Mosque, Inc., and the Organization of Afro-American Unity. He wanted to internationalize the civil rights struggle by raising it to the level of a struggle for human rights (Malcolm X, *Autobiography of Malcolm X).* On February 21, 1965, El-Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X) was assassinated.

1956. Miss Autherine Lucy, a Black student, attempted to enter the University of Alabama. She faced organized violence and required a police escort. Because of the white rioting, she was suspended and then expelled.

The Protest Era

1956. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., organized a complete boycott of the Montgomery, Alabama, bus system. One year later, the company was bankrupt and was forced to desegregate. Reverend King headed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and led a massive protest movement across the South (Martin Luther King, *Stride Toward Freedom).*

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Clarence Kailin.

1957. The African nation of Ghana achieved independence under Kwame Nkrumah, the leading force for African Unity. Afro-Americans took an increasingly greater interest in Pan-Africanism and in African freedom and independence.

1957. Nine Black children under the leadership of Daisy Bates attempted to integrate Central High School at Little Rock, Arkansas. They met with prolonged armed resistance organized by Governor Faubus. This was one more saga of Black perseverence and heroism (Daisy Bates, *The Long Shadow of Little Rock*, p. 61).

The 1960's were a decade of expanding protest with "freedom rides," marches, demonstrations, voter registration campaigns, school boycotts and other tactics designed for each protest situation.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party was formed to combat the racism of the established party and to mobilize Black political power (Len Holt, *The Summer That Didn't End).*

Whites killed two Blacks as James Meredith attempted to enter the University of Mississippi; the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, was bombed, killing four children; William L. Moore, white postman of Baltimore, was shot to death in his one-man-march (1963); Medgar Evers, NAACP leader of Jackson, Mississippi, was assassinated (1963); in Mississippi, Michael Schwerner, James Chaney and Andrew Goodman were killed by the Klan police (1964); the 1964 Mississippi Summer Project, organized by SNCC, CORE, SCLC and NAACP, suffered 1,000 arrests, 35 shootings, 30 bombings and 35 church burnings–100 people were beaten and six were murdered.

1960. The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was organized. "Tent cities" appeared as Blacks were evicted by white landlords for attempting to register to vote in Fayette County, Tennessee.

1960. The "sit-in" movement was launched by students attempting to integrate a Woolworth lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina.

1962. The median income for white families was $5,570 and $2,908 for nonwhite (V. W. Henderson, *Labor Fact Book*, 1965, p. 71).

1963 In August, a quarter of a million people marched peacefully on Washington, D.C., to dramatize the Black demand for equality.

1964. Uprisings in the cities were begun by Black people no longer able to tolerate segregation, poverty and police brutality: Harlem (July); Brooklyn (July); Rochester (July); Jersey City (August); Patterson, New Jersey (August); Dismore, Illinois and Philadelphia. In 1965, there were uprisings in Watts, California, Chicago and North Philadelphia. Rebellion continued in 1966 and 1967.

1965. The August issue of *Ebony* magazine defined racism as "The White Problem in America."

1966. Edward Brooke, a Black Republican, was elected Senator from

Massachusetts. He was one of the few Republicans to come out against continued United States involvement in Vietnam.

1966. Huey P. Newton and Bobby G. Seale organized the Black Panther Party for self-defense. They immediately worked on community problems, opposing the Cultural Nationalists who make no distinction between racist and non-racist whites, and who believe that a Black man cannot be an enemy of Black people (Philip S. Foner, ed., *The Black Panthers Speak,* and Gene Marine, *The Black Panthers).*

1967. On April 4, Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke out on the Vietnam War, calling for a five-point program of: (1) ending the bombing; (2) declaring a cease-fire; (3) stopping the spread to other Indo-Chinese countries; (4) recognizing the National Liberation Front; and (5) setting a date for withdrawal (Martin Luther King, Jr., "A Time to Break Silence," reprinted in *Freedomways* magazine, 2nd quarter, 1967).

1967. On April 28, Mohammed Ali refused induction and was subsequently stripped of his boxing title and not permitted to box in the United States. Ali, a Muslim minister, stated, "No, I am not going 10,000 miles to help murder and kill and burn other people simply to help continue the domination of white slavemasters over the dark people the world over. This is the day and age when such evil injustice must come to an end" *(Freedomways,* 1967, Vol. 2, Front Cover).

1968. On February 9, unarmed students attempted to desegregate a bowling alley in Orangeburg, South Carolina. According to an eyewitness reporter, the students were chased by the police who "fired a volley of shots from a knoll in front of the campus. ...troopers dragged two of the wounded about 20 yards across the grass campus and then down an embankment and out onto the sidewalk." Three students were killed and 26 were wounded (Michael Davis, *Baltimore Afro-American Newspaper,* February 17, 1968).

1968. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated on April 4. Outbursts in 125 cities followed the news of Reverend King's death. Scores of people were killed and thousands were wounded.

1968. The Poor People's March to Washington, D.C., led by Reverend Ralph Abernathy, began in Memphis, Tennessee.

The Decade of the Seventies

1970's Attention was starting to focus on prison conditions. Black legislators found that racism was rampart in what were considered "reformed" California judicial and prison systems. Angela Davis became involved in exposing the racist nature of "indeterminate sentence," whereby a person may receive a one-year-to-life sentence for the smallest offense, as did "Soledad Brother" George Jackson (Angela Davis, *If They Come in the Morning).* George Jackson was accused in 1960 of robbing a filling station of seventy dollars. Said Jackson, "I accepted a deal–I

agreed to confess and spare the county court costs in return for a light county jail sentence. I confessed, but when time came for sentencing, they tossed me into the penitentiary with one [year] to life" *(Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson,* p. 21).

1970. On May 15, "a fusillade of police gunfire killed two Negro men and wounded 16 others, including six girls in front of a women's dormitory at predominantly black Jackson State College. . ." ("Police Guns Kill Two Black Students," *Madison Capital Times,* May 15, 1970).

1970. On May 17, in Augusta, Georgia, police killed six Black men during a disturbance. According to the coroner's report all were shot in the back, one man nine times, one eight, one seven, one twice and two once (Bruce Galphin, "Blacks Slain in Augusta, Shot in Back," *Madison Capital Times,* May 20, 1970).

1971. The opening of the 92nd Congress found 12 Black Representatives, but still less than one-third of the minimal 43 needed to equal the Black proportion of the population.

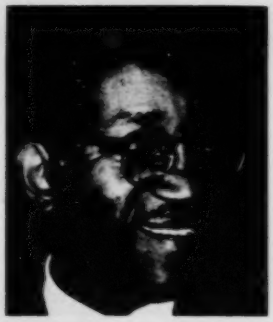
1971. The February 6 issue of the Baltimore *Afro-American* newspaper contained a review of "All in the Family" by Whitney M. Young, Jr. Mr. Young said the show should be taken off the air because it only succeeds in spreading the poison of bigotry making it, by repetition, more respectable. He criticized the "clever liberal writers for their anti-working attitudes," and stated, "Studies show. . .many of the upperclass men who control the racist institutions in our society are more deserving of exposure than workers, some of whom are used by racists to keep them from natural alliances with Black workers."

1971. Whitney M. Young, Jr., Executive Director of the National Urban League, died in Lagos, Nigeria, on March 12.

Contemporary Black Authors

Lerone Bennett, Jr.
Clarence Kailin.

Arna Bontemps.
Clarence Kailin.



John Hope Franklin.
Clarence Kailin.

1971. On August 21, George Jackson was killed in the San Quentin prison yard. Prison officials claimed Jackson was shot in an escape attempt. The August 28 *New York Times* stated, "A better reason for challenging official explanations in the San Quentin case is to get at the truth of George Jackson's life, not just the truth of his death. Whether or not he was shot while escaping or was in some way "set up" for killing, his life was a real tragedy. It is indisputably an American tragedy."

1971. On September 23, inhuman prison conditions, long suppressed from public notice, led to an uprising by Attica State Prison inmates. The uprising was suppressed when Governor Rockefeller sent in one thousand state troopers. Forty-two inmates and guards were killed, apparently by police fire ("Hostages Killed By Bullets, Not Knives. No Guns Held By Inmates," *Madison Capital Times* September 24, 1971). "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons"—Dostoevsky.

1972. Busing developed into a nationwide political issue. Vernon E. Jordan, successor to Whitney Young as Director of the National Urban League, pointed out that "only three percent of the children are bused to achieve integrated schools; that no attempt is made to achieve 'racial balance,' busing just one Black child to a white school achieves what they call a 'desegregated' school; that Black children spend more time on buses than white; that, in general, children now spend less time on buses than they did when they were bused to segregated schools" (Jordan, *Afro-American,* Newspaper of Baltimore, April 15, 1972).

1972. The National Black Convention in Gary, Indiana, March 10-12, drew up a Black agenda to present to the political parties in the 1972 elections.

1972. Kwame Nkrumah, leading advocate of African unity and socialism, died on April 27. Ghana was the first African state to achieve independence on March 6, 1957; Nkrumah was its Prime Minister.

1972. On May 22, the Supreme Court ruled that a unanimous jury verdict is unnecessary for conviction in non-federal cases. This decision was seen as especially affecting minority defendants whose peers are seldom found on juries. The importance of unanimity is that when all members of a jury cannot agree as to guilt, then some reasonable doubt must exist.

The *New York Times* stated on May 28, 1972, that less-than-unanimous jury verdicts could allow "prosecutors to win more convictions, especially in conspiracy prosecutions with political overtones where juries are often divided."

1972. Angela Davis, Soledad Defense Committee member, found herself accused of murder, conspiracy and kidnapping. Her case attracted worldwide attention. She spent more than one and one-half years in prison before receiving the right to bail, and she suffered great physical deterioration. The state of California spent nearly one million dollars

on the trial, but Miss Davis was vindicated of all charges on June 5. She called this a victory for the people and asked her supporters to turn their attention to prison reforms, such as minimum wage levels, improved medical care, free access to literature and elimination of indeterminate sentences.

Angela Davis.
Clarence Kailin.

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